



**WELT
HUNGER
HILFE**

Newsletter | Issue 1 | December 2024

THE GREEN EVOLUTION

The Pathways for Food System Transformation

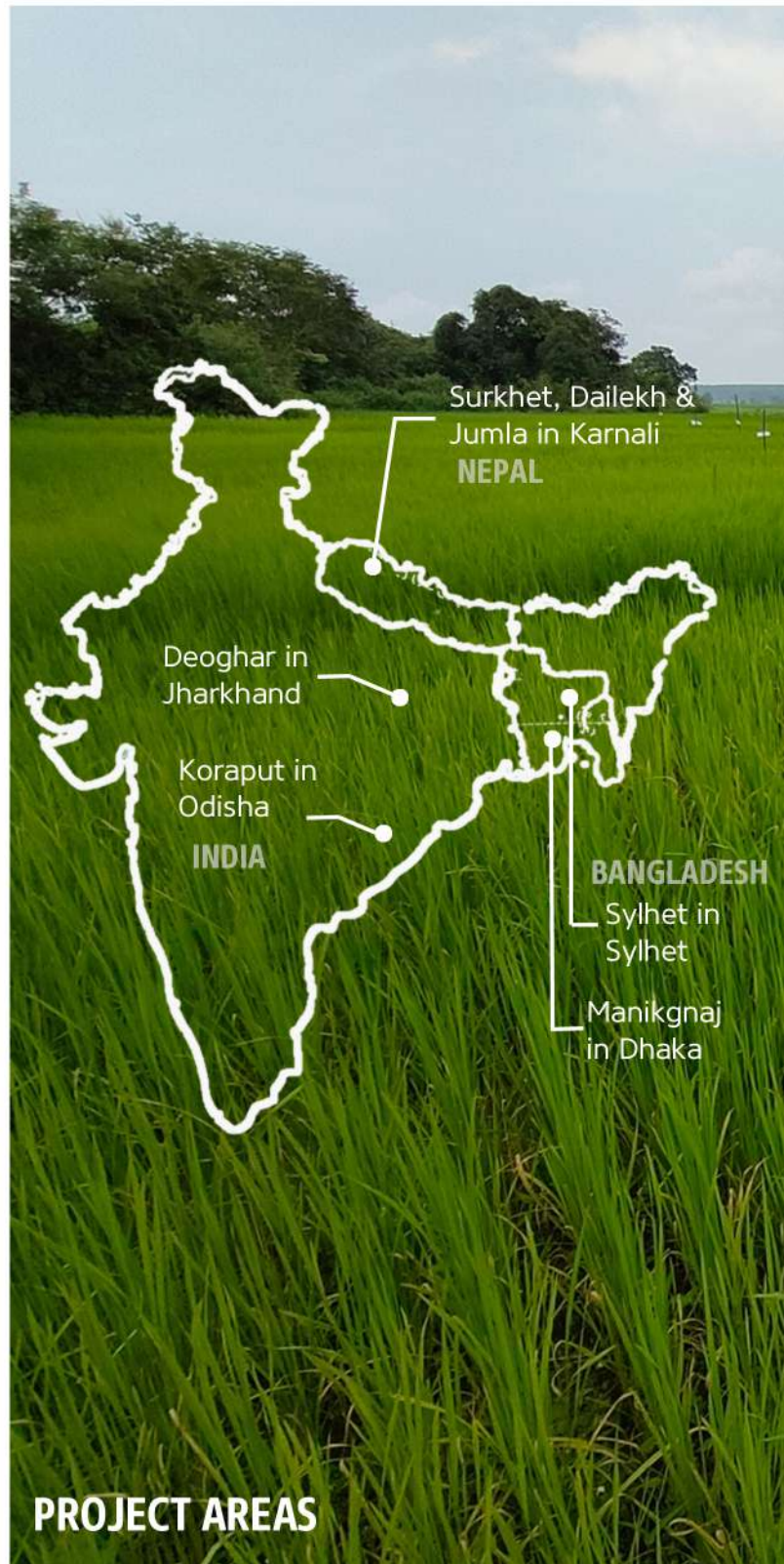
The purpose of this newsletter is to share essential information about key program interventions, updates, and compelling insights from the field. Published biannually, it will feature engaging grassroots stories, highlight significant developments, and reflect on key outcomes and the lasting impacts the program aims to achieve in the future.

Our food system is broken!

From intensive production systems that introduce toxic elements into nature and food, to poor dietary choices and disparities in access to resources and food, we are facing significant challenges. Despite its wealth of natural resources, South Asia is not immune to these issues. The region is further strained by nutrition insecurity, poverty, and climate change. The Green Evolution (GE) program tackles these challenges by integrating local knowledge with innovative farming practices, combining agriculture with natural resource management, fostering community governance, promoting local food-based small businesses, and advocating for policy alignment with this vision.



The GE program seeks to establish a transformative pathway toward creating food systems that are productive, environmentally sustainable, and socially equitable.



DEOGHAR, India

Deoghar, a plateau region in eastern India, is dotted with forests and uplands and primarily inhabited by indigenous tribes. The farming community mainly grows rainfed paddy, millet, and maize, followed by pulses and vegetables. Small ruminants and non-timber forest products are essential to their livelihoods. Erratic rainfall and water scarcity—only 10-11% of agricultural land in Deoghar is irrigated—result in low agricultural yields.

Deoghar is known for its wonderful traditional recipes based on millets and uncultivated crops harvested from forests and common lands. Local rituals, festivals, and celebrations are attuned to nature and the harvest seasons. Small local markets, called *haat*, are vibrant spaces for economic activities.



Farmers Field School (FFS) session.



Sharing project objectives with local farmers.



Until now, Abhivyakti Foundation and PRAVAH, the lead CSO, have identified villages and formed Farmer Field Schools with 25-28 farmers in each group, where farmers will co-learn about agricultural practices and farm planning. To involve multiple stakeholders, they have also held numerous dialogues in the region to engage stakeholders at all levels in the project.

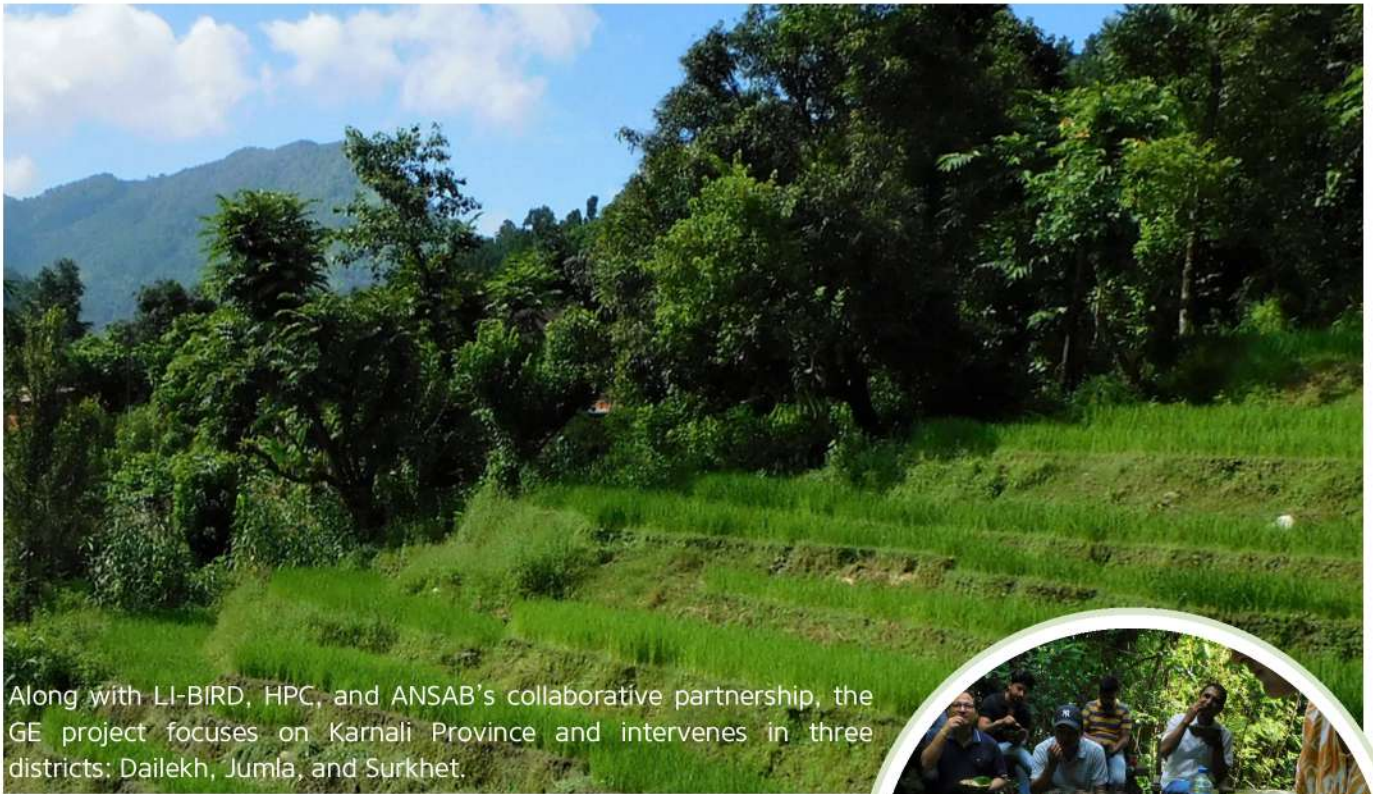
TRADITIONAL RECIPE - Jarul Ful Pakoda

Crop in Focus: Jarul Flower – the vibrant purple flower of *Lagerstroemia speciosa* that intensifies the energy of the scorching summer sun.

1. Boil Jarul flowers for 2-3 mins, once the petals losses colour, strain the water.
2. In a separate vessel, add boiled Jarul flowers, rice and gram flour, onion, coriander leaves, chilies, salt and crushed ginger, cumin powder, black pepper powder and water.
3. Mix all the ingredients and prepare a thick batter. Deep fry the fitters until its cooked and both sides turn golden.



KARNALI, Nepal



Along with LI-BIRD, HPC, and ANSAB's collaborative partnership, the GE project focuses on Karnali Province and intervenes in three districts: Dailekh, Jumla, and Surkhet.

Rich in biodiversity, wilderness, and socio-cultural heritage, Karnali embraces an ecosystem that is filled with abundant flora and fauna. The region grows diverse food crops, and some nutrition-rich varieties, such as millet, Jumli marsi, and barley, are integral to the local culture. However, challenges arise due to limited market access, food habits, labor scarcity, and climatic vulnerabilities, threatening food production. This has also led to an increased reliance on imported ultra-processed foods.

A series of startup stakeholder consultations, meet-ups, and a province-level inception workshop have been conducted along with a review of ongoing initiatives, policies, and strategies in the Karnali region focused on the Karnali Organic Mission and food and nutrition security.

TRADITIONAL RECIPE - Jumli Beans Soup

Common beans, a key crop in Jumla and Humla, are cooked into a hearty soup often with goat meat. The beans are soaked overnight and boiled until tender, then mixed with cumin seeds, garlic, and ginger paste.

The Sherpa and Lama communities add vegetables and naked barley dough for a unique flavor. It is typically consumed in winter to keep the body warm.



1



2



3



1. Foods made from local ingredients.
2. Team field visit the project areas.
3. Project launch day in Surkhet.

KORAPUT, India



Koraput's population majorly consists of scheduled tribes. The locals have well preserved the crop varieties for generations and celebrates several festivals signifying cropping season. Their indigenous knowledge for conservating various rice, millet, maize, pulse, and oilseed varieties and extensive knowledge of forests pants, have long contributed to nutrition and diet diversity.



Lack of irrigation facilities, dependence on erratic monsoon for agriculture and use of chemical fertilizers and pesticides mainly for hybrid seeds have harmed soil fertility. Additionally, mechanized harvesting has led to the rise in stubble burning. However, on the brighter side, the availability of raw materials, beneficial government schemes, and favorable climate makes Koraput a land suitable for sustainable agricultural practices as envisaged by the GE project.



4. Farmer displaying her organic produce.
5. Local tending goats in an open field.
6. Project launch event in Nandapur.

WHH partners, WASSAN and PRAGATI, conducted the project launch, with 165 farmers in Nandapur participating in millet intensification through the Odisha Millet Mission. Additionally, 133 farmers have started pigeon pea cultivation with support from ICRISAT and the Government of Odisha.

MANIKGANJ, Bangladesh



Farmer's paddy cultivation plot.

In Manikganj, landowners hold 52.75% of agricultural land, with fertile soil offering potential for diverse crops. However, soil quality is declining due to limited organic manure use and unsustainable practices. The local diet is carbohydrate-heavy, reflecting low food diversity, while gaps in nutrition education and modern farming technologies persist. Farmers rely on chemicals and ripening hormones, raising food safety concerns. Despite Dhaka's proximity offering market opportunities, buyer syndicates suppress fair pricing, and farmers lack bargaining power due to unorganized groups. Limited coordination among agricultural service providers further hampers solutions.

In spite of these challenges, the location offers an opportunity to promote agro-ecological practices that align with farmers' interests, encourage environmentally friendly cultivation, and build on existing good agricultural practices and marketing systems.



Using pheromone trap for organic cultivation.



WAVE foundation, the local lead CSO, met with Upazila-level government departments such as the Department of Agricultural Extension, the Department of Livestock Services, and the Department of Fisheries to ensure coordinated implementation of the project.

SYLHET, Bangladesh



Vermicompost production for ecological farming.

In Sylhet, a third of the population lives in poverty, with 63% working in agriculture, forestry, and fisheries. Half of rural farming households are landless. The local diet is unbalanced, relying on cereals for over 80% of daily calories, with insufficient fats, oils, and proteins due to landlessness, low income, food preferences, limited nutrition education, and low local production of non-grain foods.



Jaflong lies at the foot of the Himalayas where flash floods come from in Sylhet.



Traditional fishing system in Haor.

Food safety is also at risk. Overuse of pesticides, declining fish populations, biodiversity loss, unbalanced diets have worsened the risk. Additional challenges include a lack of education, technology, marketing skills, and absence of active agricultural cooperatives.

A strong network of trained advisers, numerous agricultural retailers, contracted growers ensuring buy-back rights, and producer groups, however, support farmers. Site-specific research, high mobile penetration, and government policies promoting digitalization and information access favour the project's implementation and outreach potential.

The project's initial activities include securing approval from the Bangladesh NGO Affairs Bureau, releasing funds, onboarding the team, informing authorities, and providing an orientation on FIVDB and WHH policies. Efforts to identify participants and intervention areas are ongoing.

Funded by



THE GREEN EVOLUTION

Implemented by



Abhivyakti Foundation
www.avfinidia.org
Email id: avfoundation@gmail.com



Asia Network for Sustainable
Agriculture and Bio
www.ansab.org.np
Email id: ansab@ansab.org.np



FIVDB
www.fivdb-usa.org
Email id: info@fivdb.net



Himalayan Permaculture Center
www.himalayanpermaculture.com
Email id:



Local Initiatives for Biodiversity,
Research and Development
www.libird.org
Email id: info@libird.org



PRAGATI
www.pragatikoraput.org
Email id: pragatikoraput@gmail.com



PRAVAH
www.pravahjarkhand.org
Email id:
admin@pravahjarkhand.org



WASSAN
www.wassan.org
Email id: Sabyasachi@wassan.org



Wave Foundation
www.wavefoundationbd.org
Email id: info@wavefoundationbd.org

Contact Us

Shantanu Garg
Regional Programme Coordinator,
The Green Evolution
Welthungerhilfe Country Office
A-3, Soami Nagar, New Delhi – 110017, INDIA
Tel. +91 8957691633
shantanu.garg@welthungerhilfe.de

Sharmila Pun
Technical Expert: Food System and Nutrition
Welthungerhilfe Country Office
341, Kalika Mandir Marga, Sanepa, Lalitpur, Nepal
Tel. +977 015452060
npl.info@welthungerhilfe.de

Mamunur Rashid
Head of Project
Welthungerhilfe Country Office
House # CWN (A) 3B, Road # 49, Gulshan-2,
Dhaka-1212, Bangladesh
Tel. +8801712118365
mamunur.rashid@welthungerhilfe.de